



**BRIDGEPORT REGIONAL
BUSINESS COUNCIL**

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BRIDGEPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
LEADERSHIP GREATER BRIDGEPORT
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

February 25, 2014

TO: Connecticut General Assembly, Planning and Development Committee
RE: Public Hearing Testimony
SUBJECT: Bridgeport Tax Revaluation Delay
BY: Paul S. Timpanelli, President and CEO, Bridgeport Regional Business Council

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Planning and Development Committee, my name is Paul Timpanelli and I am here today in my capacity as President and CEO of the Bridgeport Regional Business Council, a 1,000 member business membership association and regional Chamber of Commerce in Bridgeport. Of our 1,000 member businesses, about 500 are physically located within the City of Bridgeport. The Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce is affiliated with the Bridgeport Regional Business Council.

I appear before you today representing those businesses to urge your support for the legislation that would allow for a two year exemption applicable to the October, 2013, and October, 2014, tax revaluation as it pertains to property values of the City of Bridgeport, thereby providing added time for depressed property values to rise in keeping with projected economic expansion and thereby preventing a situation that could result in the dramatic slow-down of economic development in the City.

To implement a revaluation now would very negatively impact continuing efforts to rebuild the City's tax base and ultimately begin to lower the burden on residential taxpayers by creating an artificially larger commercial tax base. The following factors impact the City's condition that, we believe, speak to the justification of a holding-off in implementing a property revaluation:

- The cities in the State of Connecticut disproportionately experienced subprime loans and foreclosures in the recent recession (2,830 foreclosures);
- These record numbers of property foreclosures helped to create a very significant drop in residential and even commercial values;
- Multi-family dwellings and condominiums have decreased in value by as much as 50% and single family homes by about 40%;
- Preliminary commercial values are also trending toward major decreases;
- If revaluation occurs during these periods the resulting mill rate will likely increase to a level that would stagnate development, discourage investment and clearly result in further erosion of businesses as well as residents;
- With the trend clearly in the direction of economic recovery, slower than some might like but trending right nevertheless, Bridgeport, as well as the state's other urban centers, need time to recoup valuation losses, thereby gaining added time for current and planned development to occur, and, thereby, ultimately contributing to tax rate stability and reduction.

The Board of Directors of the Bridgeport Regional Business Council as well as its affiliate, the Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce, supports legislative efforts to delay the implementation of Bridgeport Tax Revaluation.